

Butler, Jennie C

From: william.zieske@rosshardies.com
Sent: Tuesday, April 13, 1999 2:40 PM
To: FDADockets@test.oc.fda.gov
Subject: Irradiation labeling

Written comment re proposed rule allowing reduction in prominence of irradiation labeling, to FDA Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305):

As consumers and persons concerned about what they eat and drink, we strongly protest the proposed rule allowing reduction in prominence of irradiation labeling now being considered by the FDA. Consumers should have every opportunity to easily make purchasing decisions, particularly such decisions about products which they ingest.

We don't speak in terms of "rights," because the word is tired and overused. Instead, we would like to impress upon you that it is the responsibility of every public employee of the Food and Drug Administration to protect the interests of consumers of food products. The FDA and its employees are charged with this responsibility before any other. If the FDA chooses to sacrifice its responsibility in response to pressure from industry, it does not serve the public interest.

There is no conceivable purpose for allowing less prominent labeling other than to reduce public awareness of issue of food product irradiation and to reduce the number of consumers who will notice and act upon the labeling information in making their purchasing decisions. It is not the province of our government and its agencies, particularly an essential agency such as the FDA, to reduce consumer and marketplace information, regardless of the benefit such action may confer on a commercial industry. We respectfully request that you act to affirm your commitment to the informed consumer, and to consumers who wish to be informed. We ask that you not pass the proposed rule which would allow reduction in prominence of irradiation labeling.

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